

18

A VIEW



OF THE

PRINCIPLES AND FORMS

OF THE

CHURCH OF SCOTLAND, AS BY LAW ESTABLISHED.

PRESENTED TO THE PRESBYTERIAN CONGREGATION OF SAINT JOHN, NEW
BRUNSWICK.

1791 - 1876

BY GEORGE BURNS, D. D.

Minister of Saint Andrew's Church, in the City of Saint John.

of the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by promise,
laying on of the hands of the Presbytery."—1 Tim. iv. 10.

SAINT JOHN

PRINTED BY HENRY CHURCH, PRINCE WILLIAM STREET.

1876.

ADVERTISEMENT.

In organizing our Infant Church by the appointment of Office-Bearers, I thought it might be useful to some of my hearers who had left Scotland at an early period of life, and to others who had been trained in the principles of Presbyterian Government in different quarters of the world, to explain the Constitution of the Church of Scotland, with a particular reference to the design and duties of the Eldership. I soon found that my labour was not in vain; that there were many who hailed the information communicated; and that a few copies of the Discourse for the use of the Congregation might be of permanent advantage. These suggestions of friends whose judgment I respect, together with an anxious wish to remove every ground of misrepresentation, induced me to commit these pages to the press, with the explicit declaration, that I deprecate all controversy on the subject, and that nothing was farther from my intentions than to detract from any Christian denomination whatever. Whilst the substance of the Discourse is retained, the arrangement is slightly altered, and quotations introduced from writers of authority instead of my own individual illustrations. Within the limits of one discourse, a sketch is all that could be attempted, but were I placed in circumstances favorable to such inquiries, I might be induced to enter on a more minute and enlarged discussion of the subject.

G. B.

Saint John, 13th December, 1817.

TH place
equall
trace
search
by det
duct;
schem
artific
the ho
blindne
mind
influen
our inte
which
to rend
tations
truth a
doubt,
mast st
inquiry
purpose
frequen
Amid
solatory
maintain
speak of
Constitu
under o
State—
then, co
Governm
former r
office of
forms is
was fra

THE NEW BRUNSWICK MUSEUM

A VIEW, &c.

THE History of Religious Error, which occupies such a prominent place in the records of the Christian Church, is a subject of inquiry equally interesting and important. It is interesting, as it leads us to trace those windings in which the human mind is prone to wander in its search after truth; to contemplate human nature in a variety of lights, by detecting the principles which operate conviction and influence conduct; to observe the causes which combine to promote the success of one scheme and the failure of another; to mark, at once, the ingenuity of artifice and the force of prejudice, the despotism of religious bigotry and the horrors of mental delusion, the extravagance of perversion and the blindness of credulity. It is important, as it tends to impress on the mind of man a feeling of its own imbecility; to guard us against the influence of perverse associations and preconceived opinions; to stimulate our intellectual energies in investigating the foundation of those systems which prefer claims to credibility and demand the reception of mankind; to render our minds proof against the allurements of imposing representations, and to lead them unfettered by prejudice, to the infallible oracles of truth as the standard to which an appeal must be made in every case of doubt, and, before which, as the ultimate tribunal, every human opinion must stand or fall. Thus, though the interest which such a subject of inquiry excites be not always of an agreeable kind, yet, the important purposes to which it proves subservient, should render it an object of frequent historical research.

Amid the war of contending passions, systems, and opinions, it is consolatory to think that a Christian Church has been established and maintained in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland. I speak only of one Christian Church, because I view the Ecclesiastical Constitutions of England and Scotland as forming *one Church*—associated under one Head—in every view co-ordinate—maintained by the same State—equally pure in principle and efficient in operation. Wherein, then, consists the difference? It wholly consists in the *Form of Church Government*. The one is *Episcopalian*; the other is *Presbyterian*—the former maintains the pre-eminence of *Bishops*, the latter includes the office of Bishop in that of *Presbyter*. This union in every thing but *forms* is recognised by the Church of England; for in Canon 55, which was framed in 1604, when the Church of Scotland had assumed a
 • Presbyterian

Presbyterian form, her Clergy are commanded to "pray for the Churches of England, Scotland and Ireland; as parts of Christ's holy Catholic Church which is dispersed throughout the world." And in conformity with this is the language of Bishop Hall in his *Ironieum*, Sec. 6. "Blessed be God, there is no difference, in any essential point, between the Church of England and her sister reformed Churches. We unite in every article of Christian doctrine, without the least variation, as the full and absolute agreement between their public confessions and ours testifies."

In explaining the principles and forms of the *Presbyterian* system, I shall attend to the language of Scripture and the Fathers on the subject—the establishment of *Presbytery* in North Britain—the original constitution of that Church—its present Form of Government—its Articles, Rites, &c.—and finally, its practical influence.

1st.—The term *Presbyterion* is derived from the Greek word which signifies *senior* or *elder*; and the *Presbyterians* are so denominated because they require the co-operation of *Elders* in the Government of the Church. In a general and enlarged sense all the office-bearers of the Church whether ordained for *rule* simply or for *preaching* as well as *governing*, are termed *Presbyters* or *Elders*. The titles *Bishop* and *Elder* seem to be used in Scripture as synonymous, the one expressive of the *oversight* which a Minister is appointed to take of his flock, the other, not so much of *age* as of *advanced stature* in the Christian life.—Dr. Mosheim in his account of the First Century says, "The rulers of the Church at this time were called either *Presbyters* or *Bishops*, which two titles are, in the New Testament, undoubtedly applied to the same order of men. These were persons of eminent gravity and such as had distinguished themselves by their superior sanctity and merit."* In Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, the same thing is maintained. "The public functions of religion were solely intrusted to the established Ministers of the Church, *bishops* and the *presbyters*; two appellations which, in their first origin, appear to have distinguished the same office and the same order of persons. The name of *presbyter* was expressive of their age, or rather of their gravity and wisdom. The title of *Bishop* denoted their inspection over the faith and manners of the Christians who were committed to their pastoral care."† The learned Anselme, Archbishop of Canterbury, who died about the year 1109, explicitly tells us that "by the Apostolic Institution, all *Presbyters* are *Bishops*."‡ In the Canon Law we find the following decisive declaration, "Bishop and *Presbyter* were the same in the primitive church; *Presbyter* being the name of the persons *age*, and *Bishop* of his *office*."§ In a work against *Seminaries* by Bishop Bilson, he makes various extracts from the writings of Jerome, and the conclusion to which he is led is thus

* Eccles. Hist. vol. 1, page 101. † Decl. and Fall of the R. E. vol. 2, page 325 and Hooker's Eccles. Polity 1, 7. ‡ Comment. on Titus and Phil. § Just. Leg. Can. 1: 21

thus
count
great
and
learn
Univ
in th
are
must
false.
confi
in his
no w
well
for in
expres
On be
byters
Majes
broug
making
Diony
ever a
degree
cannot
Forbes
asserti
as well
the Ep
on tha
purpos
Presby
bearer
to publ
ments;
Bishop
so conv
time of
be actu
Presbyt
Archbis
the Ger
Christia

* Lib.
‡ Lib. 2.
Remarks c

for the
rists holy
And in
Irenicum,
ial point,
hes. We
variation,
sions and
system, I
the subject
constitu-
Articles,

ord which
ominated
nment of
bearers of
as well
ishop and
expressive
look, the
an life,—
rulers of
ps, which
the same
ch as had
it.* In
thing is
trusted to
ers; two
ished the
byter was
The
anners of
† The
the year
Presbytery
ve deca-
church;
s office.‡
extracts
is led is
thus

page 325
just. Leg.

thus expressed, "The church was at first governed by the common council of Presbyters, *Bishops* must, therefore, understand that they are greater than Presbyters, rather by custom than the Lord's appointment; and that Bishops came in after the Apostles time."* Dr. Whitaker, a learned Divine of the Church of England and Professor of Divinity in the University of Cambridge, replies to Durie, a zealous Scotch hierarchist, in these terms, "You assert with many words that Bishop and Presbyter are *divers*, but if you will retain the character of a *modest* divine, you must not so confidently affirm that which all men see to be so evidently false. Jerome plainly writeth that *Elders* and *Bishops* are the same, and confirmeth it by many places of scripture." Croft, Bishop of Hereford, in his work entitled *Naked Truth*, says expressly, p. 46, "The Scripture no where expresses any distinction of order among the *Elders*." It is well known that the celebrated Archbishop Usher projected a scheme for introducing "that kind of *Presbyterian government*" as he himself expresses it, "which, in the Church of England had long been disused."—On being asked by Charles I, whether he found in antiquity that *Presbyters alone ordained* any? his answer was "Yes; and I can shew your Majesty more, that Presbyters alone successively ordained *Bishops*," and brought as an instance of this the Presbyters of Alexandria choosing and making their own Bishops, from the days of Mark, till Heraclas and Dionysius." Again, we find this venerable Prelate declaring, "I have ever affirmed my opinion to be, that Bishop and Presbyter differ only in degree and not in order; and consequently, that in places where Bishops cannot be had, the ordination by Presbyters standeth valid."† Bishop Forbes, a zealous supporter of Episcopacy, in his *Irenicum*, makes these assertions, "Presbyters have, by divine right, the power of *ordaining*, as well as of *preaching* and *baptizing*." Those churches which have not the Episcopal regimen, by no means forfeit the character of true churches on that account, nor lose their ecclesiastical right.‡ To the same purpose is the testimony of Bishop Burnet. "I acknowledge Bishop and Presbyter to be one and the same office, and so plead for no new office-bearer in the church. The first branch of their power is their authority to publish the Gospel, to manage the worship and dispense the sacraments; and this is all that is of divine right in the ministry, in which Bishops and Presbyters are equal sharers."§ Archbishop Tillotson was so convinced of the validity of ordination by Presbyters and at the same time of the close affinity of the two establishments of Great Britain, that he actually advised the Episcopal Clergy of Scotland to unite with the Presbyterian church in that country and submit to its government.||—Archbishop Wake, in a letter addressed to the celebrated Le Clerc, of the Genevan School, in the year 1719, expresses the following truly Christian sentiments, "I freely embrace the Reformed Churches," (all

* Lib. 1. p. 318. † See the *Judgment of the late Archbishop of Armagh* 110—123.
‡ Lib. 2. Cap. 2. § Vind. of the Church and State of Scotland p. 331. ¶ See *Remarks on his life*, 8vo. 1754.

(all Presbyterian except that of England) "notwithstanding they differ in some respects from that of England." "I am so far from being so uncharitable as to believe that any of those churches on account of this defect (for so I must be allowed without invidiousness to call it) ought to be cut off from our communion; nor can I, by any means, join with certain mad writers among us, in denying the validity of their sacraments and in calling in question their right to the name of Christian Churches. I could wish to bring about, at any price, a more close union between all the Reformed Churches." Joseph Bingham, a man of extensive erudition, and distinguished by his exertions in the cause of Episcopacy, declares that the Church of England "does by no means cut off from her Communion, those who believe Bishops and Presbyters to be the same order. Some of our best Episcopal divines, and true sons of the Church of England, have said the same, distinguishing between order and jurisdiction, and made use of this doctrine and distinction to justify the ordinations of the Reformed Churches against the Romanists." Dr. John Edwards, a most respectable divine of the Church of England, having adduced the attestations of Clement, Ignatius, Cyprian, Irenaeus, Theodoret, Jerome, and others, gives the following as the result of his inquiries. "From all these we may gather that the Scripture Bishop was the chief of the Presbyters; but he was not of a distinct order from them. And as for the times after the Apostles, none of these writers, nor any ecclesiastical historian, tells us, that a person of an order superior to Presbyters was set over the Presbyters." "To single Fathers, we may add Councils, who deliver the same sense. This then is the true account of the matter. Bishops were Elders or Presbyters, and therefore of the same order; but the Bishops differed from the Presbyters in this only, that they were chosen by the Elders to preside over them at their ecclesiastical meetings or assemblies. But in after ages, the Presbyters of some churches parted with their liberty and right, and agreed among themselves that ecclesiastical matters should be managed by the Bishop only."† Sir Peter King, Lord Chancellor of England about the beginning of the eighteenth century, published a work of celebrity, entitled "*An enquiry into the Constitution, &c. of the Primitive Church that flourished within the first 300 years after Christ*—In this work his Lordship shews "that a Presbyter, in the Primitive Church, meant a person in holy orders, having thereby an inherent right to perform the whole office of a Bishop and differing from a Bishop in nothing, but in having no parish, or pastoral charge, &c." Grotius speaks of it as an evidence of the antiquity and genuineness of Clemens's Epistle to the Church at Corinth, that "he nowhere takes notice of that peculiar authority of Bishops, which was first introduced into the Church of Alexandria and from that example into other Churches, but evidently shews, that the Churches were governed by the common council of Presbyters, who by him and the Apostle Paul, are all called Bishops."‡ But it is needless to multiply quotations on a point

* French Church and Apol. p. 262.

† Edwards's Remains, p. 253.

‡ Epist. ad Bignon.

point
unequ
when
would
Bishop
the id
princi
But
value
guage
shops
lders w
of those
Elders
mothy
held a
commo
stowing
by the
discove
goodne
tions.
many i
through
manner
where I
came at
worship
or at dis
assembl
deacons
bale th
tinct fun
ever num
the Bre
pears fro
to the Ch
in these
by the A
ments" w
an obvi
the Elder
worthy o
trine" i
ruled wel
this pass
ministers

point which the unanimous consent, both of Greek and Latin Fathers unequivocally supports. The simple fact that in the reign of Charles II. when Episcopacy was restored in Scotland, the Presbyterian Clergy who would conform were liberally received and many of them consecrated as Bishops *without Episcopal ordination*, is a sufficient acknowledgment of the identity of Bishops and Presbyters, in point of *order*. On any other principle, a spurious succession must have been introduced.

But high as these authorities are in themselves, they derive all their value in a case of this kind from their agreement with the spirit and language of the sacred volume. In Acts xx. 28 the persons are called *Bishops* who v. 17, were called *Elders*;—in Titus i. 5, those are called *Elders* who v. 7, are termed *Bishops*;—in 1 Tim. iv. 14, the collective body of those who held sacred offices in Lystra are named the *Presbytery* or *Eldership* and are said to have concurred with the Apostle in setting Timothy apart to the ministry. “The persons” says Dr. Macnight “who held sacred offices in the Church were named *Elders*, because they were commonly chosen from among the first or earliest converts. And in bestowing sacred offices on them, the Apostle shewed great prudence; for by their early conversion and constancy in professing the Gospel, they discovered such a soundness of understanding, such a love of truth and goodness and such fortitude as rendered them very *fit* for sacred functions. In Acts xiv. 21, we are told that Paul and Barnabas having taught many in Antioch, Iconium, Lystra and Derbe returned; and in passing through these cities v. 23 *ordained them Elders in every Church*. In like manner there were elders at Ephesus, Acts xx. 17—In the great cities where Paul resided for years, it is reasonable to think the disciples became at length so numerous, that they could not all meet together for worship in one place, but must have assembled either in different places or at different hours in the same place. In either case, these separate assemblies must have had different preachers, presidents, catechists, and deacons. Nay, if any of these assemblies was very numerous, it is probable that more persons than one were appointed to perform each distinct function. Yet, however great the multitude of disciples and however numerous the places where they assembled might be in any city, the Brethren there were always considered as one Church. This appears from the inscriptions of the Apostles Epistles, where it is not said, *to the Churches at Corinth*, or *to the Churches at Ephesus*, but *to the Church in these cities*.” To the office of *Elders* there is distinct reference made by the Apostle, 1 Cor. xii. 28, under the abstract terms “*helps, governments*” which are synonymous with *helpers, governors*; and in 1 Tim. v. 17 an obvious distinction is intimated between the Pastors who taught and the *Elders* who simply ruled. “Let the elders who rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in word and doctrine” i. e. in teaching and preaching. Had there not been some who ruled well and yet did not labour in word and doctrine, the meaning of this passage would have been absurd: On the Presbyterian plan, all ministers or persons “who labour in word and doctrine” are on office
elders

elders or rulers in the Church; but the *converse* does not hold, for there are elders or rulers who do not so labour. In conformity with this order of things is the comment of that learned Episcopalian Dr. Whitby, on the passage referred to. "The Elders of the Jews" says he "were of two sorts; 1st such as governed in the synagogue and 2dly such as ministered in reading and expounding their scriptures, &c." And these the Apostle here declares to be the most honorable, and worthy of the chiefest reward. Accordingly, the Apostle, reckoning up the offices God had appointed in the Church, places *teachers* before *governments*, 1 Cor. xii. 28." But the word *elder*, *elders* (which is just the English translation of *Presbyter*, *Presbyters*) occurs so frequently in scripture, that whoever will seriously peruse the sacred writings and yet deny there is any scriptural warrant for Presbytery, may with as much reason and truth, after reading the works of Thucydides and *Levy*, assert that in them no mention is made of any facts relative to the histories of Greece and Rome.

From the writings of the Fathers who flourished during the centuries immediately succeeding the Apostolic age, many explicit testimonies might be produced in support of the Presbyterian scheme. Clemens Romanus who lived towards the close of the first century, in his First Epistle to the Corinthians who had rebelled against their office-bearers, represents the government of the Church as vested in the latter, and entreats "those who laid the foundation of the insurrection to return to the obedience of their *Presbyters*." Jerome, who was not long posterior to Clemens, in his remarks on Titus, chap. I. explicitly asserts that a *Presbyter* is the same as a *Bishop*, and that before, through the suggestion of the devil, factions arose in religion, the churches were governed by a *Common Council of Presbyters*—*communi presbyterorum consilio ecclesia gubernabatur*. Ignatius (Epist. ad Trallianos, edit. Oxon. p. 66) calls the Presbyters or elders of his times, the *sounèdrium Theou*, the sanhedrim or council of God, which was the common appellation of the Jewish ecclesiastical judicial court, and unquestionably designates a corresponding judicatory in the Christian church. Polycarp wrote his Epistle to the Church at Philippi early in the second century, and in it he conveys this admonition, "It behoves you to abstain from these things, being subject to the Presbyters and Deacons, as to God and Christ." Papias, a companion of Polycarp and a hearer of John, is introduced by Eusebius in his *Ecclesiastical Hist.* lib. iii. cap. 39. as thus expressing himself, "I shall not think it grievous to set down in writing with my interpretations, the things which I have learned of the Presbyters and remember as yet very well, being fully certified of their truth. If I met any where with one who had conversed with the Presbyters I enquired after the sayings of the Presbyters; what Andrew, what Peter, what Philip, what Thomas or James had said; what Ariston or John the Presbyter said," &c. Irenæus, who suffered martyrdom about the year 202 after Christ, represents Presbyters as coming in regular succession from the Apostles. "Obey those Presbyters in the church who have the succession as we have shewn from the Apostles, who with the succession of the Episcopate, received the gift of truth,

truth,
fore t
togeth
Such
I will
conten
be est
of the
rate m
" of d
ceiving
Christ
they r
appeal
usage
with A
of the
times
2d.-
system
earliest
tain an
the Re
alone.
need i
ment i
try till
Palladi
and the
and a l
dispell
God.
till: the
parties
or Pres
the sup
union.
to have
the tru
inquiry
vices of
from th
they en

• Book
de excom
Cent. 11
John de

truth, according to the good pleasure of the Father.* "We ought therefore to adhere to those Presbyters who keep the Apostles doctrine and together with the *presbyterial succession* do shew forth sound speech. Such Presbyters the church nourishes;—and of such the prophet says— I will give them Princes in peace and *Bishops* in righteousness†" I shall content myself with adducing one quotation more on a point which might be established by innumerable proofs. It is the declaration of the authors of the *Magdeburg Centurie*, a work of the highest authority for its accurate representations of ecclesiastical antiquity. "The right" say they "of deciding respecting such as were to be excommunicated, or of receiving upon their repentance, such as had fallen from the profession of Christianity, was vested in the *elders of the Church*;"‡ and, in proof of this, they refer us to Tertullian's *Apology*. These and similar testimonies I appeal to merely as the *media through which information as to Apostolic usage is conveyed*, and I have no hesitation in declaring my concurrence with Archdeacon Blackburn, when he says, that "he knows no Fathers of the Christian Church *more ancient* than the Apostles of Christ, nor any times *more primitive* than those in which they preached and wrote."§

2d.—Ministerial parity, which forms the *spirit* of the Presbyterian system, was maintained by the most distinguished characters from the earliest times; was admitted by the first Reformers, both in Great Britain and on the Continent of Europe; and was the principle on which all the Reformed churches were founded, with the exception of England alone. Those who are at all acquainted with Scottish history have no need to be told, that Presbyterianism was the form of church government in North Britain from the first dawn of Christian light in that country till the Fifth Century when diocesan Bishops were introduced by Palladius.¶ The Reformation commenced in Germany in the year 1517, and the spirit which animated Luther soon fired the breasts of Zuinglius and a band of Christian heroes, who, in Switzerland and other countries dispelled the mists of superstition by calling on the nations to behold their God. In Scotland, the Reformation began in 1560, and from that period till the Revolution there was a constant struggle among the different parties, whether the church should be framed according to an Episcopal or Presbyterian model. In the end, the latter prevailed, and must retain the superiority as long as the nations of England and Scotland remain in union. "The licentious lives of the Clergy" says Dr. Robertson, "seem to have been among the first things that excited any suspicion concerning the truth of the doctrine which they taught, and roused that spirit of inquiry which proved fatal to the Popish system. As this disgust at the vices of ecclesiastics was soon transferred to their persons, and shifting from them by no violent transition settled at last upon the offices which they enjoyed; the effects of the Reformation would have extended not only

* Book against Heresies lib. iv. cap. 43. † Lib. iv. cap. 44. ‡ "Jus traheandi de excommunicandis, aut recipiendis publice lapsis, penes seniores ecclesie erat." Cent. iii. cap. vii. p. 151. § Confessional p. 36. ¶ See the writings of Mejer, John de Fordus, Hector Boethius and Archbishop Usher, passim.

only to the doctrine, but to the form of government in the Popish church, and the same spirit which abolished the former would have overturned the latter. But in the arrangements which took place in the different kingdoms and states of Europe in consequence of the Reformation we may observe something similar to what happened upon the first establishment of Christianity in the Roman Empire. In both periods, the form of ecclesiastical policy was modelled, in some measure upon that of the civil government. When the Christian Church was patronized and established by the state, the jurisdiction of the various orders of the ecclesiastics distinguished by the names of Patriarchs, Archbishops and Bishops, was made to correspond with the various divisions of the empire, and the ecclesiastic of chief eminence in each of these possessed authority more or less extensive in proportion to that of the civil magistrate who presided over the same district. When the Reformation took place, the Episcopal form of government with its various ranks and degrees of subordination; appearing to be most consistent with the genius of monarchy, it was continued with a few limitations in several Provinces of Germany, in England, and in the northern kingdoms. But in Switzerland and some parts of the Low Countries where the popular form of government allowed more full scope to the innovating genius of the Reformation, all pre-eminence of order in the church was destroyed, and an equality established more suitable to the spirit of republican policy. As the model of Episcopal government was copied from that of the Christian church as established in the Roman empire, the situation of the primitive church, prior to its establishment by civil authority seems to have suggested the idea and furnished the model, of the latter system, which has since been denominated *Presbyterian*. The first Christians oppressed by continual persecutions, and obliged to hold their religious assemblies by stealth and in corners, were contented with a form of government extremely simple. The influence of religion concurred with the sense of danger, in extinguishing among them the spirit of ambition, and in preserving a parity of rank, the effect of their sufferings and the cause of many of their virtues. Calvin, whose decisions were received among many protestants of that age with incredible submission,* was the patron and restorer of this scheme of ecclesiastical policy. The church of Geneva, formed under his eye and by his direction, was deemed the most perfect model of this government; and Knox, who, during his residence in that city, had studied and admired it, warmly recommended it to the imitation of his countrymen.†

John Knox, the descendant of an ancient and respectable family, was born in the immediate neighbourhood of Haddington, East Lothian, in the

* Archbishops Cranmer and Grindal, together with their associates, corresponded with Calvin on many points relating to church government and addressed him in the language of profound veneration. These early Reformers of the English Church respected his talents, learning, and worth, and were better qualified to judge of his character, than those who now load him with reproach, whilst they boast of their superior illumination.

† History of Scotland, vol. II. p. 40—48.

the ye
n late
associ
hostili
ing for
author
the au
cause
a libel
a weal
to Eng
Articles
cured
the no
guardi
tation
Dr. W
prove
ceived
VI. an
don, w
bench
Privy C
episcop
in the
In atte
respect
sevent
body a
disting
and Ge
thus de
"This
from yo
venerab
of a we
lent ins
to him,
to breat
translat
his labor
insulting
of his r
preaching
His cha

* Dr.
and Scott

ish church,
 overturned
 the different
 formation we
 at establish-
 s, the form
 that of the
 ed and esta-
 of the eccle-
 and Bishops,
 fire, and the
 thority more
 who presided
 the Episcopal
 ordination;
 it was con-
 in England,
 parts of the
 owed more
 eminence
 ished more
 Episcopal
 established
 prior to its
 e idea and
 on denomi-
 nual perse-
 ith and in-
 ely simple.
 , in extin-
 a parity of
 eir virtues.
 nts of that
 er of this
 med under
 del of this
 ad studied
 f his coun-
 family, was
 othian, in
 the
 corresponded
 him in the
 5th Church
 dge of his
 aft of their

the year 1505. His character has been grossly misrepresented, and until a late distinguished Biographer* appeared in his cause, his name was associated with turbulent ambition, brutal ferocity, wild fanaticism and hostility to every thing in the shape of literature and science. By bringing forth from obscurity and rescuing from oblivion many important and authentic documents regarding the rise and progress of the Reformation, the author to whom I refer has been the means of doing justice to a cause in which the dearest interests of men are involved. It would be a libel on the good sense of the British nation to maintain that Knox was a weak and empty declaimer, for such was his influence that he was called to England in December 1551, where he was employed in revising the *Articles of Religion*, previous to their ratification by Parliament, and procured an important change in the communion-office, completely excluding the notion of the corporeal presence of Christ in the sacrament, and guarding against the superstitious adoration of the elements. In a disputation with Latimer, after the accession of Queen Mary, the Prolocutor, Dr. Weston, complained of Knox, in language sufficiently intemperate to prove how acutely he felt the wound which his favorite system had received.† When in England in 1553, Knox was made Chaplain to Edward VI. and was offered the vacant living of All-Hallows in the city of London, which he declined. Even the prospect of elevation to the episcopal bench did not fire his ambition, for the King with the concurrence of the Privy Council, offered him a bishoprick, which he rejected, declaring the episcopal office to be destitute of divine authority in itself, and its exercise in the English church to be inconsistent with the ecclesiastical canons. In attestation of this fact, the Biographers of Knox quote various respectable authorities.‡ The Reformer died at Edinburgh in the sixty-seventh year of his age, not so much worn out by years as by fatigues of body and anxieties of mind. He was known and esteemed by the most distinguished individuals among the reformed in France, Switzerland, and Germany. Principal Smeton, who cannot be suspected of partiality, thus defends him against the attacks of his calumniator Hamilton. "This illustrious, I say *illustrious* servant of God, John Knox, I will clear from your feigned accusations and slanders rather by the testimony of a venerable assembly, than by my own denial. This pious duty, this reward of a well spent life, all of them most cheerfully discharge to their excellent instructor in Christ Jesus. This testimony of gratitude they all owe to him, who they know ceased not to deserve well of all till he ceased to breathe. Released from a body exhausted in Christian warfare, and translated to a blessed rest, where he has obtained the sweet reward of his labours, he now triumphs with Christ. But beware, sycophant, of insulting him when dead: for he has left behind him as many defenders of his reputation, as there are persons who were drawn, by his faithful preaching, from the gulph of ignorance to the knowledge of the Gospel."§ His character was revered by the contemporary divines of the Church of

* Dr. Mc'Cric. † Fox, p. 1326. ‡ Mc'Cric's Life of Knox, vol. 1. p. 101. 3d ed. and Scott's Lives of the Refs. p. 143. § Smeton's Resp. ad Hamilt. Dial. p. 95-115.

of England. Bishop Bale dedicated his work on the Scottish Writers to John Knox and Alexander Aless, and though he had been the opponent of the Reformer at Frankfort, he addresses him in the most endearing and flattering terms. "Te vero, Knoxe, *frater amantissime, &c.*" adding this general testimony to his virtues—"Nemo est enim qui tuam fidem, constantiam, patientiam, tot erumnis tanta persecutione, exilioque diuturno et gravi testatum, non collaudet, et non admiretur, non amplectatur."* Aylmer, Bishop of London, in a work professedly written to confute one of his opinions, bears an honourable testimony to his learning and integrity.† And Ridley who was highly offended at the opposition he made to the introduction of the English Liturgy at Frankfort, describes him as "a man of wit, much good learning, and earnest zeal."‡ It was reserved for the successors of these illustrious Prelates, who appeared towards the close of the Sixteenth Century, to detect his errors and expose his labors to contempt. His character is thus drawn by Robertson—"Zeal, intrepidity, disinterestedness, were virtues which he possessed in an eminent degree. He was acquainted too with the learning cultivated among divines in that age; and excelled in that species of eloquence which is calculated to rouse and to inflame. His maxims, however, were often too severe, and the impetuosity of his temper excessive. Rigid and uncompromising himself, he shewed no indulgence to the infirmities of others. Regardless of the distinctions of rank and character, he uttered his admonitions with an acrimony and vehemence, more apt to irritate than to reclaim. This often betrayed him into indecent and undutiful expressions with respect to the Queen's person and conduct. Those very qualities however, which now render his character less amiable, fitted him to be the instrument of Providence for advancing the Reformation among a fierce people, and enabling him to face dangers and to surmount opposition, from which a person of a more gentle spirit would have been apt to shrink back." The following is M'Crie's graphical delineation:—"Knox," says he, "bore a striking resemblance to Luther in personal intrepidity and in popular eloquence. He approached nearest Calvin in his religious sentiments, in the severity of his manners, and in a certain oppressive air of melancholy which pervaded his character. And he resembled Zuinglius in his ardent attachment to the principles of civil liberty and in combining his exertions for the reformation of the church, with uniform endeavors to improve the *political* state of the people. Not that I would place our Reformer on a level with this illustrious triumvirate. There is a splendour which surrounds the great German Reformer partly arising from the intrinsic heroism of his character and partly reflected from the interesting situation in which his long and doubtful struggle with the Court of Rome placed him in the eyes of Europe, which removes him at a distance from all who started in the same glorious career. The Genevan Reformer surpassed Knox in the extent of his theological learning and in the unrivalled solidity and clearness of his judgment.

* Balei Script. Illus. Maj. Brit. poster. pars. p. 175, 176. † Life of Aylmer, p. 237.
‡ Strype's Life of Grindal, p. 19, 20.

judg
inasc
in pr
which
tone
know
name
wheth
impor
do ju
Engla
has la
ciates
often
of ign
Hume
but gi
he wil
very ri
than M
of the
apt to
litic an
commi
able, if
life-tim
printed
venturo
it might
low de
reform
the sens
ness, or
ever ma
was goo
opposers
freedom
from the
the rays
the free
variety,
we are u
shall be p
so lost to

* M'C
† Sewa
Profic Wor

Writers to
the opponent
tendering
&c." adding
quam fidem,
que diurno
plectatur."*
confuse one
g and inte-
he made to
ibes him as
as reserved
towards the
his labors
Zeal, intre-
an eminent
among dice
which is
were often
rid and un-
of others.
his admo-
than to
ful expres-
e very que-
fitted him
ion among
ount oppo-
e been apt
neation :—
in personal
t Calvin in
a certain
And he
es of civil
the church,
ple, Not
as triumvi-
Reformer
and partly
d doubtful
pe, which
e glorious
tent of his
eess of his
judgment.

mer, p. 288.

judgment. And the Reformer of Switzerland though inferior to him in masculine elocution and daring courage, excelled him in self-command, in prudence, and in the species of eloquence which steals into the heart, which persuades without irritating, and governs without assuming the tone of authority. But though "he attained not to the first three," I know not among all the eminent men who appeared at that period any name which is so well entitled to be put next to theirs as that of Knox, whether we consider the talents with which he was endowed or the important services which he performed."† I am peculiarly solicitous to do justice to the Scottish Reformer, because the celebrated Historian of England,‡ from a love of every thing that could render religion ludicrous, has laboured to traduce the reputation of his countryman and his associates in the work of reformation; and, because the name of Knox is too often blended with that of *Presbytery*, so as to form a hideous compound of ignorance, fanaticism, and intolerance. In a letter to Dr. Robertson, Hume betrays his own secret. "Tell Goodall," says he, "that if he can but give up Queen Mary, I hope to satisfy him in every thing else; and he will have the pleasure of seeing John Knox and the reformers made very ridiculous."§ Lord Hailes was better acquainted with their history than Mr. Hume, and in his Historical Memoirs of the Provincial Councils of the Scottish Clergy, p. 41, the following remark occurs, "We are too apt to figure to ourselves the Reformers of that age, as persons of impolitic and inflexible austerity." And Milton, arguing against the abuses committed by Licensers of the press, says, "Nay, which is more lamentable, if the work of any deceased author, though never so famous in his life-time and even to *this day*, come to their hands for license to be printed or reprinted, if there be found in his book one sentence of a venturous edge, uttered in the height of zeal, (and who knows whether it might not be the dictate of a divine spirit?) yet not suiting with every low decrepit humour of their own, though it were Knox himself, the reformer of a kingdom, that spake it, they will not pardon him their dash: the sense of that great man shall to all posterity be lost for the fearfulness, or the presumptuous rashness of a perfunctory licenser."¶ What ever may have been their personal infirmities, the cause of the reformers was good, and its triumphs shall be celebrated when the names of its opposers shall have perished from the earth. Theirs was the cause of freedom;—a freedom at whose voice the kingdoms of Europe awoke from the sleep of ages to activity and vigour; whose magic touch kindled the rays of genius, the enthusiasm of poetry, and the flame of eloquence; the freedom which poured into our lap treasures invaluable, rich in variety, and boundless in extent. To treat with scorn those to whom we are under such deep obligations, and whose generous deeds, posterity shall be proud to record and to celebrate! Impossible!—you cannot be so lost to every generous feeling; you cannot be so dead to every principle

* M'Crie's Life of Knox, vol. 11, p. 260, 3d ed. † David Hume, Esq.

‡ Stewart's Life of Robertson. History of Scotland, vol. 1, p. 25. § Milton's Prose Works, vol. 1. p. 311.

ciple of gratitude.—The Reformers have been much calumniated for the ravages which were committed on the sacred edifices. Dr. McCrie proves that the accounts are much exaggerated—that the demolition of the monasteries with their dependencies is all of which they can be justly accused, *other excesses being chargeable on a lawless banditti*—that the intentions of the Leaders in the Reformation as expressed in the commissions which they gave, were in every respect moderate, enlightened, and pure—and that though the idols and images were committed to the flames without mercy, the retaliation was not immoderate considering that their adversaries had set them the example, of consigning the *living images of God to the same fate*.^{*} That these were the only sacrifices offered *is*, is attested by a popish writer who must be admitted as a witness having *no bias towards the accused*.[†] “From the order and laws of our nature,” says Dr. Gilbert Stewart, “it perpetually happens that advantages are mixed with misfortune. The conflicts which led to a purer religion, while they excite under one aspect the liveliest transports of joy, create in another a mournful sentiment of sympathy and compassion. Amid the felicities which were obtained and the trophies which were won, we deplore the melancholy ravages of the passions, and weep over the ruins of ancient magnificence. But while the contentions and the ferments of men, even in the road to improvement and excellence, are ever destined to be polluted with mischief and blood, a tribute of the highest panegyric and praise is yet justly to be paid to the actors in the reformation. They gave way to the movements of a liberal and a resolute spirit. They taught the rulers of nations that the obedience of the subject is the child of justice, and that men must be governed by their opinions and their reason. This magnanimity is illustrated by great and conspicuous exploits, which at the same time that they awaken admiration are an example to support and animate virtue in the hour of trial and peril. The existence of civil liberty was deeply connected with the doctrines for which they contended and fought. While they treated with scorn an abject and cruel superstition, and lifted and sublimed the dignity of man by calling his attention to a simpler and wiser theology, they were strenuous to give a permanent security to the political constitution of their state. The happiest and the best interests of society were the objects for which they buckled on their armour, and to wish and set for their duration and stability are perhaps the most important employments of patriotism and public affection. The Reformation may suffer fluctuation in its forms, but for the good and the prosperity of mankind, it is to be hoped that it is never to yield and to submit to the errors and superstitions it overwhelmed.”

Presbyterianism, as the National Form of Religion, was established in North Britain, by a formal statute from the Crown, June 5, 1592. In this Act were defined the powers and privileges of the ecclesiastical courts. All former ratifications had been vague and indeterminate.

Church

^{*} Life of Knox, vol. 1, p. 435—441.
lib. 10, p. 537, edit. 1675.

[†] Lessius, de reb. gest. Scotorum,

Church
dently
prelate
legal
ratified
of Un
The
of Pop
The o
the or
seen in
ment,
that P
a syste
all the
Indeed
worship
those o
in a le
bishop
and Ba
ing in
Norwic
“O! w
would i
Zurich
number
New Te
in order
Of the s
Redman
Jewel an
1, p. 385
common
substitut
cial Syn
proposed
that perio
During
Scotland
In all gre
of modern
of the pas
ties which

^{*} See Co
Annals 11.
Load, 1570

Church courts did indeed meet and exercise certain powers independently of bishops; but no law could be shewn for these meetings, excluding prelatical government. This Act of Parliament is therefore reckoned the legal charter of the National Church of Scotland; and as such it was ratified at the Revolution in 1688, and finally confirmed in the Articles of Union between the two Kingdoms, in 1707.

The establishment of Presbytery is as much to be attributed to horrors of Popery as to any hostility to the Episcopal form of Church polity. The current of popular feeling had turned itself very powerfully against the order of Bishops, as well from the remembrance of what they had seen in the superstitious and immoral hierarchy of the ancient establishment, as from the danger which they had continually before their eyes, that Popish emissaries might again pervert the nation, and engraft upon a system of worship and discipline in some points resembling their own, all the mummery and folly which the Reformation had exploded.*—Indeed, the private sentiments of the English Reformers respecting worship and church-government harmonized in every material point with those of Knox and the reformers of Switzerland and Geneva. Hooper, in a letter, dated February 8, 1550, informs Bullinger, that the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Bishops of Rochester, Ely, St. Davids, Lincoln, and Bath, were sincerely bent on advancing the purity of doctrine, agreeing in all things with the Helvetic churches.† Parkhurst, Bishop of Norwich, in a letter to Gualter, February 4, 1573, fervently exclaims, “O! would to God, would to God, once at last, all the English people would in good earnest propound to themselves to follow the church of Zurich as the most absolute pattern.”‡ Thirteen Bishops, with a great number of other ecclesiastics, subscribed this proposition, “that in the New Testament there is no mention made of any degrees or distinctions in order, but only deacons or ministers, and of priests or bishops.”§—Of the same mind were Cranmer, the Bishop of St. Davids, Dr. Cox, Dr. Redman, Latimer and Hooper, Pilkington (Bishop of Durham), Bishops Jewel and Aylmer, whose declarations are all recorded by McCrie, vol. 1, p. 385–389. In fact, the title of *Bishop* was very generally disused in common speech, during the reign of Edward VI, and that of *superintendent* substituted in its place. Courts, similar to the kirk-sessions and provincial Synods afterwards introduced into the Scottish Church, were proposed by Cranmer, and all the protestant bishops and divines of that period, were anxious for the introduction of ecclesiastical discipline. During the interval between the Restoration and the Revolution, Scotland was the scene of transactions over which humanity must sigh. In all great changes whether of a political or religious nature, the laws of moderation and decency will be outraged—the excesses and ravages of the passions must be deplored. I have no wish to palliate the enormities which disgraced the conduct of our ancestors, when they bound themselves

* See Cooks Hist. of the Church of Scotland. † Burnet 111. 201. ‡ Strype Annals 11. 286, 342. Burnet ut supra, p. 324. § Latimer's Sermons, fol. c1x. Load, 1570. Strype Mem. of the Ref. 11, 366.

themselves by a *solemn league and covenant* to effectuate the extirpation of episcopacy. But let it not be forgotten that they atoned by *blood* for their uncharitableness and crimes. "It was a moving sight," says Bishop Burnet, "to see ten of the prisoners hanged upon one gibbet at Edinburgh. Thirty-five more were sent to their countries and hanged up before their own doors; their ministers (episcopal) all the while using them hardly, and declaring them damned for their rebellion."* I shudder to relate the refinement of cruelty to which they were subjected. The measures of the episcopalian party, it is impossible to justify. "I had drunk in the principles of moderation so early" says the author last quoted, "that though I was entirely Episcopal, yet I would not engage with a body of men that seemed to have the principles and tempers of Inquisitors in them, and to have no regard to religion in any of their proceedings."† And it is well known that the proceedings of his brethren were so repugnant to the principles and feelings of that excellent prelate, Leighton, that he resigned his archbishoprick of Glasgow, appeared at Court, and told the King, "He would not have a hand in such oppressive measures; were he sure to plant the *Christian religion* in an infidel country by them; much less when they tended only to alter the form of church-government."‡ Burnet adds "He thought he was in some sort accessory to the violence done by others, since he was one of them, and all was pretended to be done to establish them and their order."§ I shall conclude this detail in the language of modern stanch Episcopalians. "Our principles are generally known; friendly they are to regular government and to legitimate establishments of every kind. We do not much admire the constitution and discipline of the established Church of Scotland; but as an establishment sanctioned by the laws and guarded by the public faith, we respect it; we have defended it, and would yet defend it, against the rash and ignorant zealots who would overturn it as readily if they could, as they would our own. We have long remarked what we think rather an inconsiderate error on the part of the Clergy of Scotland:—They have almost as little in common, and quite as little to do with, the Covenanters as we have. Were such principles and practices to become dominant again, the Church of Scotland would meet with as little mercy as our own." "Were all the enormities charged against the Church and government and clergy of Scotland, at the period referred to, true, we should deeply regret that such men were ever vested with so much power; but this conviction and regret would not affect our opinions either as to the Episcopal constitution of the Church, or the Monarchical constitution of the State. In like manner we are of opinion that the conduct of the Covenanters no farther affects the present Clergy and Church of Scotland than as they choose to approve and defend it, when it appears to us to be utterly indefensible. "The Church of Scotland and the people of Scotland, in general, have much reason to be indignant at those who would make them answerable for the wildness, the extravagance, and the crimes of the Covenanters, and who would place the present

* Burnet's Hist. of his own times, fol. p. 236, 237. † Ibid p. 155. ‡ Ibid p. 113.

present
pertur
effect,
than t
Glen
Scotlan
3d.—
Acts o
orders
tors—I
was on
of Mini
truth m
distinct
should l
to dispe
sures as
They w
ing in I
the plea
twelve in
John Ed
John Sp
John W
John W
of Kilma
the Chu
compiled
was virt
allowed
order to
and to pr
the Gene
sioners v
tively and
what was
Presbyter
take such
Being app
main in of
nued as, t
when the
and the P

* British
reviewers is
series that I
made for the
ention. †
had no grea

o extirpation
by blood for
says Bishop
shot at Edin-
hanged up
while using
I shudder
ected. The
y. " I had
r last quoted,
engage with a
of Inquisitors
proceedings."†
ere so repug-
e, Leighton,
t Court, and
ve measures,
try by them;
overnment."
the violence
ended to be
this detail in
principles are
and to legiti-
re the consti-
d; but as an
public faith,
, against the
f they could,
think rather
land:—They
with the Co-
es to become
s little mercy
the Church
rred to, true,
with so much
our opinion.
Monarchical
ion that the
t Clergy and
end it, when
Scotland and
indignant at
the extrava-
ld place the
present

† Ibid p. 117.

present Church on the same foundation with the vilest and most violent perturbators of the peace of their country. The present Church has, in effect, no more to do with the principles and practices of the Covenanters, than the present government has to do with the horrible massacre of Glenco; and ill do they consult the dignity and honour of the Church of Scotland who maintain the contrary.*

3d.—In the Presbyterian Church of Scotland as originally settled by Acts of Parliament 1560 and 1567, there were properly speaking six orders of Ecclesiastical Office-bearers—Superintendants—Pastors—Doctors—Readers—Elders—and Deacons. The order of Superintendants was only a temporary establishment, rendered necessary by the paucity of Ministers at the period of the reformation. In order that the light of truth might be more speedily diffused, the country was divided into twelve distinct circuits, to each of which it was resolved that a Commissioner should be appointed with power to plant Churches, to appoint pastors, to dispense the ordinances of religion, and in general to adopt such measures as might appear expedient for advancing the work of reformation. They were appointed by the General Assembly which held its first meeting in December 1560, were subject to the jurisdiction, and removable at the pleasure, of that ecclesiastical court. Although the districts were twelve in number, only five superintendants were ever appointed, namely, John Erskine, Baron of Dun, Superintendant of Angus and Mearns,—John Spottiswood, Minister of Calder and Superintendant of Lothian,—John Winram, Sub-Prior of Saint Andrews and Superintendant of Fife,—John Willock, Superintendant of the West,—John Carswell, Minister of Kilmartine, Superintendant of Argyle, and Bishop of the Isles.† When the Church was fully organized according to the *Second Book of Policy* compiled by Andrew Melvil and others, the order of Superintendants was virtually abolished, although the individuals then in office were allowed to retain their titles and, to a certain extent, their authority. In order to supply the want of pastors which was still felt to a great degree, and to promote the establishment of Presbyteries throughout the country, the General Assembly from time to time appointed visitors or Commissioners who were to act sometimes individually and sometimes collectively and whose office it was to inspect the state of Presbyteries, to report what was wrong, to depose or suspend the unworthy, to plant Kirks and Presbyteries, to attend to the patrimonial interests of the Church and to take such other steps as might appear expedient for the general good. Being appointed at one General Assembly, they were understood to remain in office till the next, when they might either be removed or continued as, to the wisdom of that Court, appeared fit. After the year 1592, when the Presbyterian Government was formally ratified by King James and the Parliament, the office of visitors gradually fell into disuse, and at

* British Critic for May 1817, p. 449. I am aware that the opinion of anonymous reviewers is of little weight in any case, and it is only because they are *professed adversaries* that I consider it of any value in this instance. The only apology that can be made for the Covenanters is that they were the objects of a cruel and relentless persecution. † The title of *Bishop* was retained by three of the Protestant Clergy, but they had no greater power than other ministers.

at length when the country was well planted with churches and ministers, the necessity of it was less visible. *Pastors* were the ordinary parish ministers to whom was committed the care of souls. Their office was to preach, dispense ordinances, exercise discipline, visit, examine, rebuke, and exhort. The *Doctors* or *teachers*, as the word signifies, were an order of men appointed specially for the purpose of expounding the Scriptures, confuting errors, taking charge of the literature and theological studies of candidates for the ministry. Although the two offices were viewed as in themselves distinct, yet in few parishes were they held by separate individuals. The only vestige which now remains of the ancient order of Doctor is to be found in the Professors of Theology in the different Universities. As the highest Degree in Divinity, Law, and Medicine, the title is sometimes conferred on Scottish Churchmen by legally constituted Universities, but it is purely an honorary designation, connected with no particular office, and totally distinct from the ecclesiastical constitution.

At the period of the Reformation, there were no parochial schools; the consequence of which was a general ignorance of the art of reading. The inconvenience of this was soon felt by the early reformers, whose zeal for the interests of literature was exceeded only by their zeal for the cause of God and truth. They directed their utmost energies to the grand work of obtaining the erection of Schools in every parish, to be supported by the patrimony of the church. In the mean time, as obstacles arose in the way of their benevolent scheme, principally through the avarice of the king and nobles who had seized on the revenues of the church, it was found necessary to appoint in each parish an order of *Readers*, whose office it was to read the scriptures to the people on each returning sabbath. In those places where there was a regular Pastor, he did the duty of reader for the most part, but in cases where there was no Pastor, the Readers were employed as a kind of temporary substitute, and as the plantation of churches went on, those who had conducted themselves with propriety in the station of Readers, were promoted to the office of Pastors. Readers were allowed occasionally to expound, to visit the sick, and to catechize the young. But they were prohibited from administering the sacraments and exercising the discipline of the church. This office was found necessary during the whole of the seventeenth century, until by the glorious Revolution there were secured to Scotland the advantages of general education. Now, the general ability to read, renders it less necessary, although the recommendation of our standards still authorises pastors to read the scriptures publicly *without comment*, as well as to explain their meaning and application, in, what is almost peculiar to our Church, the exercise of *Lecturing*. In some of the Gaelic Chapels and in a few of the Highland Parishes, the Clerks or Precentors act as Readers during the intervals of public worship, as many of the Gaelic population are still unable to read. It is devoutly to be wished that the exertions of the Society for the support of Gaelic schools, combined with those of the Society in Scotland (incorporated by Royal charter) for propagating the Gospel in the Highlands and Islands, may be crowned with much success.

The

TH
mous
and H
as ex
grega
discip
occup
Churc
the s
Epist
rulers
author
years
depriv
Bishop
tans a
power
with t
from a
reform
mentio
of ecc
order
John I
in the
greater
Lawson
devote
ecclesi
by As
the VI
Westm
Parlian
regardi
"elder
ment o
govern
beside
mission
reform
church
assembl
Afterw
for life
appoint
care of
the refor

The word *Elder* (as formerly proved) was, in primitive times, synonymous with Bishop. But although the term is thus used both in Greek and English, it is now generally restricted by us to denote the *lay eldership*, as expressive of those who are chosen from among the body of the congregation to co-operate with the minister in the exercise of rule and discipline in the church. The Eldership in this sense has in all ages occupied a most important place in the purer departments of the Christian Church. I have already shown you how often it is brought into view by the sacred writers, and that throughout the history of the Acts and the Epistles to the Churches, references are made to the office of Elders as rulers in the church, assessors with the minister, and entrusted with similar authority over the body of professing Christians. When in the course of years the church began to be corrupted, the ordinary members were deprived of all power and authority in its management and operations. Bishops gradually assumed the whole power to themselves. Metropolitans step by step gained the ascendancy over Bishops, and at length all power seemed to be vested in the person of one man, who was dignified with the name of *papa, father*, Pope. When the church began to emerge from superstition, the Eldership was in various places restored. In the reformed churches of France, Holland, Switzerland, and Scotland, not to mention others, an important place was assigned to Elders in the platform of ecclesiastical procedure. In the Book of Common order or in the order of Geneva, which was the plan of discipline primarily adopted by John Knox and his brethren, we find the office expressly recognised, and in the second Book of Discipline drawn up by Andrew Melvil (one of the greatest men who has appeared in any church) with the assistance of Lawson, Craig, and others of the reformed Ministers, we find a chapter devoted expressly to the office of Elders. This is the platform of our ecclesiastical constitution, ratified as it has been from time to time both by Assemblies and Parliaments, and particularly sanctioned by King James the VI. in 1592. In the form of church government agreed on at the Westminster Assembly, approved by Assembly 1645, and sanctioned by Parliament in 1690 and 1707, we find the following comprehensive clause regarding the office in question. "As there were in the Jewish Church, elders of the people," joined with the Priests and Levites in the government of the church, so Christ who hath instituted government and governors ecclesiastical, in the church, hath furnished some in his church beside the minister of the word with gifts for government and with commission to execute the same when called thereunto; which officers, reformed churches commonly call *Elders*." At the first planting of a church in any place after the reformation, the people were required to assemble for the purpose of choosing Elders from among themselves. Afterwards, the Elders in office chose one another, and the office continues for life (*aut vita aut culpa*) as that of the ministry itself. *Deacons* were appointed by the primitive church expressly for the purpose of taking care of the poor and watching over the temporalities of the church. At the reformation, the office was kept up as an integrant and vital part of the

the ecclesiastical establishment. There was no provision made for the union of the offices of Elder and Deacon in the same person, and it does not appear that such a junction had place in the church till a later period: That the union of offices is in some cases absolutely necessary, cannot be denied. The congregation frequently cannot afford a sufficient number of individuals to execute the functions of each and according as the duties of distinct offices are more or less nearly related, so may the union be more or less expedient. The law of the church is expressly in favour of the distinction, but *general usage* is in favour of the union.—Thus it appears that the original constitution of the church to which we profess to belong, was founded on the genuine spirit of Apostolic example, in so far as that example sanctions a variety of offices suited to the case of an infant establishment, and that now from the progress of knowledge together with circumstances of a local or temporary nature, some of these offices being unnecessary are either wholly discontinued or united in one individual person.

4th.—In the year 1592 those Acts of Parliament of which the Clergy had long complained as encroachments on their prerogatives, were rescinded or explained, and the presbyterian government was established as it now exists, in its Kirk Sessions, Presbyteries, Provincial Synods, and General Assemblies, with all the different branches of their discipline and jurisdiction. As legally chartered courts, they are incorporated with the civil polity of the country.* The scheme of government thus sanctioned by the King and Parliament, is usually regarded as an exact copy of the church at Geneva. This seems not to be the *real* state of the case. Knox officiated for some time in the Church of England, but before his exile on the continent he seems to have had a secret dislike to its Liturgy. His dislike was increased during his residence on the continent by intercourse with Calvin and the foreign reformers. At Geneva he saw a church which *upon the whole* corresponded with his idea of the divinely authorized pattern; but he did not indiscriminately approve nor servilely imitate that or any other existing establishment. For example, *Holidays* are observed in the Genevan church, which were abolished in that of Scotland at the first dawn of reformation; and it is well known that Calvin was so far from being opposed to Liturgies, that he composed certain forms of prayer to be used by the ministers of Geneva, in the public worship on Sundays and other holidays and at the administration of the sacraments. Other points of difference might be noticed, but it is unnecessary.

The lowest ecclesiastical judicatory in Scotland is the Kirk-Session or Parochial Consistory, composed of the minister and several respectable lay-men associated with him as *elders*, for the purpose of taking charge of the religious interests of each particular parish. The ministers of a number of contiguous parishes, together with certain representatives from the kirk-sessions, form a Presbytery; and a plurality of Presbyteries (differing in number according to accidental circumstances) forms a provincial

* See Erskine's Institutes of the Law of Scotland:

vincin
no su
call h
from
in au
proce
super
comp
amen
Assem
tribun
late m
sity o
Assem
more
of the
given
in its
Princi
The G
sentati
(five)
The p
hundre
send si
five me
in the
ministe
sixtyfo
and six
the un
House,
the Sco
is grace
is style
in nam
Suprem
the whe
of the
legislati
Parliam
member
effects.
assembl
Gentry
Assembl
althoug

made for the
n, and it does
later period :
nary, cannot
a sufficient
and according
y related, so
the church is
is in favour
stitution of
the genuine
ions a variety
and that now
es of a local
ry are either

h the Clergy
es, were reas-
s established
Synods, and
discipline and
ated with the
us sanctioned
t copy of the
of the case.
ut before his
o its Liturgy.
ent by inter-
eva he saw a
the divinely
nor servilely
ple, *Holidays*
ed in that of
known that
he composed
neva, in the
ministration
noticed, but

rk-Session or
l respectable
aking charge
ministers of a
representatives
Presbyteries
forms a pro-
vincial

vincial Synod. While the constitution of the Scottish Church admits of no superiority of one Minister (Presbyter or Bishop as you may chuse to call him) above another, it requires from all its individual members, and from all its inferior judicatories strict obedience to those who are placed in authority over them—Every court is bound to lay the record of all its proceedings from time to time before the tribunal which is its immediate superior; and any part of its proceedings may be brought, by appeal or complaint, under the review of a higher jurisdiction;—Sessions are amenable to Presbyteries, Presbyteries to Synods, and all to the *General Assembly*, which is the Supreme Ecclesiastical Judicatory and most august tribunal within the Scottish dominions. I have heard it remarked by my late much esteemed instructor Professor Dugald Stewart of the University of Edinburgh, (himself an Elder of the Church) that the General Assembly resembles the popular deliberative assembly of the ancients more than any Court which now exists in the world. I shall avail myself of the account of its constitution which that eminent philosopher has given in his *Life of Principal Robertson*, who for thirty years took a lead in its deliberations. The account is chiefly the production of Dr. Hill, Principal of St. Mary's College in the University of Saint Andrews:—The General Assembly of the Church of Scotland is composed of representatives from the presbyteries; from the Royal boroughs; from the (five) Universities; and from the Scotch church at Campvere in Holland. The presbyteries send two hundred and ninety members, of whom two hundred and one are ministers, and eighty-nine elders; the royal boroughs send sixty-seven members, all of whom are lay-men; the universities send five members, who may be either lay-men, or ministers holding an office in the university; and the church of Campvere sends two members, one minister and one lay-elder. The whole number is three hundred and sixty-four, of whom two hundred and two are ministers, and one hundred and sixty-two lay-men; including in the latter class the members from the universities. India has lately been allowed a representation in that House, and I trust that ere long the same privilege will be extended to the Scottish churches in British North America. The General Assembly is graced by the presence of the King in the person of a Nobleman, who is styled the Lord High Commissioner, who opens and dissolves the Court in name of the Crown, but has no voice in its deliberations. In this Supreme ecclesiastical judicatory is comprised the collected wisdom of the whole church; matters both civil and sacred in which the interests of the church are involved become the subjects either of judgment or legislation; and no appeal is admitted from its decisions, except to the Parliament of Great Britain. The mixture of ecclesiastical and lay-members in this and the other church courts is attended with the happiest effects. It corrects that *esprit de corps* which is apt to prevail in all assemblies of professional men. It affords the principal Nobility and Gentry of Scotland an opportunity of obtaining a seat in the General Assembly when any interesting object calls for their attendance; and although in the factious and troublesome times which our ancestors saw, the

The General Assembly, by means of this mixture, became a scene of political debate, this accidental evil is counter-balanced by permanent good; for the presence of those lay-members of high rank, whose names are usually found upon the Roll of the Assembly, has a powerful influence in maintaining that connection between Church and State, which is necessary for the peace, security, and welfare of both.—The annual sittings of the Assembly in the metropolis of the country continue only for ten days; but a committee of the whole House (called the Commission) has four stated meetings in the year for the dispatch of whatever business the General Assembly has been unable to overtake.

By the Act of 1592 which gave a legal establishment to the form of church government now delineated, the patron of a vacant parish was entitled to nominate to the presbytery a person fully qualified for the office; and the presbytery were required, after subjecting the presentee to certain trials and examinations, of which they were constituted the judges, "to ordain and settle him as minister of the parish, provided no relevant objection should be stated to his life, doctrine, and qualification." This right of presentation however, although conferred by the fundamental charter of Presbyterian government in Scotland, was early complained of as a grievance; and accordingly, it was abolished by an act passed under the Usurpation. At the Restoration it was again recovered, but it was retained only for a few years; the Revolution having introduced a new system, which vested the right of election in the heritors, elders, and heads of families in the parish. The 10th of Queen Anne at last restored the rights of patrons; but the exercise of these rights was found to be so extremely unpopular, that ministers were generally settled, till after the year 1730, in the manner prescribed by the Act of King William. During this long period, an aversion to the law of patronage took deep root in the minds of the people; and the circumstances of the times were such as to render it inexpedient for the church courts to contend with a prejudice so inveterate and universal. When the Presbyterian establishment fell a sacrifice, to the policy introduced at the Restoration, the ministers who refused to conform to prelacy were ejected from their churches and underwent a severe persecution. To this part of Scottish history I alluded under a former head, and though the non-conformists and covenanters cannot be justified in every part of their conduct; yet the firmness which they displayed exhibits an energy of character and a force of principle which has never been surpassed. Their situation, while deprived of the countenance of law, and left entirely to the guidance of private conscience, was necessarily such, as rendered the independent principles inconsistent with regular subordination and discipline. Accordingly, at the Revolution, when the Presbyterian government was re-established and many of the ejected ministers restored to their pulpits, they brought along with them into the church a spirit scarcely compatible with the connection in which it stood with the paramount authority of the State. Their successors, trained in the same sentiments, saw the law of patronage revived in times which they regarded with a jealous eye

no a scene of
by permanent
whose names
powerful influ-
State, which
—The annual
continue only
d the Commis-
ch of whatever
ke.

to the form of
ant parish was
qualified for the
g the presentee
constituted the
h, provided no
qualification of
the fundamen-
rly complained
an act passed
recovered, but
ing introduced
eritors, elders,
n Anne at last
ghts was found
ally settled, till
King William.
age took deep
the times were
contend with a
erian establish-
restoration, the
ted from their
part of Scottish
non-conformists
conduct; yet
character and a
their situation,
to the guidance
independant
discipline and
overnment was
to their pulpits,
arcely compati-
mount authority
ments, saw the
with a jealous
eye

eye and viewed it as an appendage of episcopacy which it was the duty of every good Presbyterian to oppose. While the people, therefore, resisted with violence the first attempt which was made about the year 1730 to exercise this right, the church courts, although they could not entirely disregard the law, contrived in many instances to render it ineffectual, and sanctioned by their authority the prevailing prejudices against it. They admitted it as an uncontrovertible principle in Presbyterian church government, that a presentee, although perfectly well qualified, and unexceptionable in life and doctrine, was nevertheless inadmissible to his clerical office, till the concurrence of the people who were to be under his ministry had been regularly ascertained. The form of expressing this concurrence was by the subscription of a paper termed a *Call*; in many cases there was a jarring between the wishes of the people and the rights of the patron; and in some instances, the church courts yielded to the latter, by setting aside the presentation altogether. This gave rise to the two parties in the Church known by the designations, *Moderates* and *Orthodox*, the former, sticklers for the rigorous exercise of patronage, and the latter, strenuous advocates for the cause and rights of the people. At the head of the former was the celebrated historian Dr. Robertson, who maintained, that the two capital articles which distinguish presbytery from every other ecclesiastical establishment, are the parity of its ministers and the subordination of its judicatories. "Wherever there is a subordination of courts" to use his own language, "there is one court that must be supreme; for subordination were in vain, if it did not terminate in some last resort. Such a supreme judicature is the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland; and therefore if its decisions could be disputed and disobeyed by inferior courts with impunity, the Presbyterian constitution would be entirely overturned. On this supposition, there is no occasion for the Church of Scotland to meet in its General Assemblies any more; its government is at an end; and it is exposed to the contempt and scorn of the world as a church without union, order, or discipline; destitute of strength to support its own constitution, and falling into ruins by the abuse of liberty." "As patronage is the law of the land, the courts of a national church established and protected by law, and all the individual ministers of that church are bound, in as far as it depends upon exertions arising from the duties of their place, to give it effect; every opposition to the legal rights of patrons tends to diminish that reverence which all the subjects of a free government ought to entertain for the law; and it is dangerous to accustom the people to think that they can elude the law or defeat its operation, because success in one instance leads to greater licentiousness." There is much truth in these sentiments, and they are worthy of the enlightened mind in which they were formed. Still, however, many eminent men were enlisted on the other side of the question, and the eloquence which was sometimes displayed by the illustrious combatants on these and similar questions, has not been surpassed in any Court in Europe. I hesitate to pronounce on a question which has engaged so many enlightened champions. We all

all know that it is extremely dangerous to entrust a populace with too much power, and that a Clergyman after ten years probation* may be supposed qualified to instruct a people, although at first his manner or other circumstances may not be altogether suited to their various tastes; and certain it is that some of the most eminent men and most useful preachers in the Church of Scotland were settled in opposition to the will of the people, whilst (not a few) who were ordained amid the acclamations of the multitude, proved in the end either weak or worthless. A man who has been tried and found qualified by the church itself; has sworn allegiance to its principles and forms; and holds in his hands a presentation from a qualified patron, seems to have a *civil* right to the teinds† of the Parish, whether the people choose to declare their acceptance of him as a spiritual instructor or not. At same time, patrons would do well to exercise discretion and tenderness in the disposal of their Livings, being fully satisfied that the person to be preferred is every way suited to the parish which is to be the scene of his pastoral labours. The want of this delicate attention to the peculiar circumstances of the people, was the cause of those outrages which were too often committed amid the solemnities of *Ordination* service and which required military force to repress. The same cause led to the *Secession* from the established church, which has since been divided into two parties, known by the names *Burgher* and *Anti-burgher*. Alleged corruptions in the church were the common ground of separation from her pale, and the following *Burgess Oath* imposed in some Royal boroughs gave rise to the distinction of names, "I protest before God and your Lordships that I profess and allow with my heart the true religion presently professed within this realm and authorised by the laws thereof; I shall abide thereat and defend the same to my life's end, renouncing the Roman religion called Papistry." One party saw no inconsistency in taking the oath, and therefore were called *Burghers*; the other thought that taking the oath implied approbation of the Church and her corruptions, and therefore refused; hence called *Anti-burghers*. These Dissenters are strict Presbyterians, having their respective Associate Synods, and are to be found not only in Scotland, but also in England, Ireland, and the United States of America. Almost all the Presbyterian Ministers in Nova-Scotia belong to these classes;‡ but as the grounds of distinction do not exist on this side of the Atlantic, they are all united in one body. Their Standards and Forms are those of the Church of Scotland; but their system of education is somewhat different, their theological studies not being conducted at the University but under Teachers of their own body. They

Licence

* The period of University education required in the Church of Scotland.

† *Teinds* is the term used for *Fishes* in Scotland. The Clergy of all *landward* parishes are supported by these;—those in large towns are maintained by the municipal revenues.

‡ I know of only two exceptions, Dr. Gray of Halifax and a Mr. Munro, who are of the Established Church. The Dissenters have lately settled one of their number (Mr. Thomson) at Miramichi, and there is the prospect of another soon being appointed to Manguerville.

Licen
of ch
divisi
piety.
called
retain
not ac
in the
Episc
Revol
gow, I
Bishop
Prima
neithe
The
been a
ranted
" who
of the
scriptu
forget
particu
logy it
of. T
the Co
from a
go no
beyond
(as we
other j
authori
court; v
court-ju
ent situ
may be
dity of
part of
the prac
choose t
Every i
scriptur
the prac
similar
be prove
laid dow
the view

populace with too
oblation* may be
his manner or
ir various tastes;
and most useful
sition to the will
mid the acclama-
r worthless. A
urch itself; has
in his hands a
ivil right to the
re their accept-
e time, patrons
the disposal of
ferred is every
pastoral labours.
stances of the
ften committed
quired military
the established
known by the
he church were
lows *Burgess*
e distinction of
I profess and
ed within this
le thereat and
religion called
the oath, and
aking the oath
and therefore
re strict Pres-
re to be found
United States
Scotia belong
exist on this
eir Standards
their system of
not being con-
body. They
License

Scotland.
of all *landward*
ed by the muni-
r. Munro, who
ed one of their
of another soon.

License and Ordain their own preachers and every church has the right of choosing its own pastor. At home, they have split into various subdivisions, but on the whole they are respectable for talents, learning, and piety. A species of Seceders from the Church of Scotland arose in 1752, called the *Kirk of Relief*, who differ from the establishment chiefly in retaining the right of electing their own religious instructors. I need not add, that there are also *Episcopalian Dissenters*, who are numerous in the North of Scotland. They are the only remains of the ancient Episcopal Church, which was, after various fluctuations, abolished at the Revolution. They have Seven Dioceses, namely, Aberdeen, Ross, Glasgow, Moray, Edinburgh, Dunkeld, and Brechin—they give the title of Bishop to those who preside over these dioceses, one of whom is stiled Primate, but these appellations are not recognised in law—they have neither revenues nor temporal jurisdiction.

The gradation of church government as established in Scotland, has been admired by many who view it only as a human contrivance, warranted by *expediency*, not by *Scripture*. "He" says Lord Clarendon, "who will observe all that was practised in the primitive times, cannot be of the communion of any one church in the world." When we refer to scriptural example for the authority of modern practice, we must not forget that an example could not go beyond the circumstances of the particular case in which it occurred, although by fair inference and analogy it may sanction many things which that case did not require or admit of. The application of the church at Antioch to what has been called the Council of Jerusalem, is an example and authority for a reference from an inferior to a superior court. The example could in this point go no farther from the nature of the case. But its *authority* goes far beyond it. It is quite sufficient to authorize an appeal or a complaint (as well as a reference) from an inferior court to a superior, and every other jurisdiction of the superior which the circumstances require. It authorizes not merely the subordination of *one* inferior to *one* superior court, which is all that the example mentions, but such a gradation of court-jurisdiction as the circumstances of the Christian Church, in different situations, render expedient. This is but one illustration. The idea may be illustrated by a multitude of similar cases, and shews the absurdity of *their* conduct, who, while they neglect or explain away a great part of the *practices* which is clearly found in the Bible, affect to fix down the practice of modern times to the precise *letter* of the precedents they choose to refer to, though ever so contrary to their true *spirit* and *design*. Every *iota* of the Presbyterian scheme could not possibly be found in any scripture-example, although the *general system* is explicitly authorized by the practice of the primitive church as far as the cases occurred. On similar principles, the Episcopal form has been defended. "It cannot be proved" says Dr. Paley, "that any form of church government was laid down in the Christian, as it had been in the Jewish scriptures, with the view of fixing a constitution for succeeding ages; and which consti-
tution,

tution, consequently, the disciples of Christianity; would every where, and at all times, by the very law of their religion, be obliged to adopt. The truth seems to have been, that such offices were at first erected in the Christian church, as the good order, the instruction, and the exigencies of the society at that time required, without any intention, at least without any declared design, of regulating the appointment, authority, or the distinction of Christian ministers under future circumstances.* "And" says the Bishop of Lincoln, "as it hath not pleased our Almighty Father to prescribe any particular form of civil government for the security of temporal comforts to his rational creatures; so neither has he prescribed any particular form of Ecclesiastical polity as absolutely necessary to the attainment of eternal happiness."†

5th.—The Articles of the Church of Scotland are contained in what is called the Westminster Confession of Faith, which, at the Revolution in 1688 was received as the standard of the National faith, ordaining "that no person be admitted or continued hereafter to be a minister or preacher within this church, unless that he subscribe to th's Confession of Faith, declaring the same to be the confession of his faith" And by the Act of Union 1707 the same is required "of all Professors, Principals, Regents, Masters, and others bearing office" in any of the Universities of Scotland. These Articles are generally considered *Calvinistic*. I will not dispute about *names*, but it is well known that the same doctrines were distinctly taught by several eminent Reformers, and among others by Luther himself, long before Calvin appeared. Certain it is, that the Articles of the Church of Scotland like those of the sister church, have an *anti-Calvinistic* sense—that in this acceptance they are subscribed by a majority of her Clergy—and that some have gone so far as to justify their conduct in attaching their names to the Confession of Faith and afterwards disseminating the doctrines of Socinus. The truth seems to be as the Bishop of Lincoln well expresses it in reference to the Church of England, "Our Church is not Lutheran, it is not Calvinistic, it is not Arminian, it is scriptural, it is built upon the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone."—At same time we must deplore with Dr. Haweis, the defection of her members. "Too much, like those of the English Church," says he, "they have declined from her own first principles and primitive simplicity. Her ministers exalted in all science and philosophical attainments above their predecessors; more polished in style and manners; deeper in mathematics and metaphysics; but not more evangelical, more zealous, more laborious. No where have more admired authors won the public approbation; no where have more dangerous and determined infidels appeared to corrupt the principles of the age; and the questions which have of late been discussed in the General Assembly, awfully demonstrate how great a body preponderates there against the advocates for the ancient doctrines and the faith once delivered to the saints."‡

* Paley's Moral and Polit. Phil. vol. 11. p. 302, 303. ed. 1810. † Bishop Tomline's E. em. of Theology, vol. 11. p. 398 ‡ Church Hist. by the Rev. T. Haweis, L.L.B. & M.D. Rector of All Saints, Aldwinckle, Northampton. period 3d cent. 18.

ould every where,
obliged to adopt
at first erected in
n, and the exigen-
intention, at least
nment, authority,
circumstances.”
ed our Almighty
ment for the secu-
o neither has he
absolutely neces-

contained in what
at the Revolution
l faith, ordaining
be a minister or
th's Confession of
thr.” And by the
ssors, Principals,
ne Universities of
lovinistic. If all
e same doctrines
nd among others
in it is, that the
ter church, have
re subscribed by
far as to justify
ion of Faith and
o truth seems to
e to the Church
vinistic, it is not
prophets, Jesus
e time we must
“ Too much,
e declined from
ministers exalted
ir predecessors;
atics and meta-
laborious. No
ation; no where
to corrupt the
been discussed
a body prepon-
es and the faith
I

† Bishop Tom-
Rev. T. Hawes,
eriod 3d cent. 18.

I need scarcely mention* that Baptism and the Lord's Supper are the only Sacraments recognised in the Church of Scotland. In the directory it is recommended to celebrate Baptism *publicly*, except in the case of the child's sickness, or distance from the place of worship; and sponsors are admitted only in the unavoidable absence of the parents. In no instance is the Communion celebrated more than *six* times in the course of the year, and the people are prepared for the ordinance by a *fast* on some day of the preceding week and by services on Saturday, whilst they meet again on Monday morning for public thanksgiving.—At funerals, prayers are offered up in the family before the deceased is removed, and the Clergyman is left at liberty to address the attendants at the grave if he finds it expedient.—Instrumental music is not admitted into the churches of Scotland, but of late an organ has been introduced into the Scot's church of Calcutta. The version of the Psalms now adopted as the National Psalter, was introduced by the joint authority of English and Scottish Parliaments, and ratified by the General Assembly of the Church on the 23d November 1649. The translation was made by a very distinguished Hebrew scholar, Francis Rous, Esqr. M.P. one of Cromwell's counsellors of state, and preferred, on account of his acquaintance with the Greek and Latin languages, to the Provostship of Eton school. His translation underwent various corrections by a Committee of the General Assembly. In many instances, the versification is far from being smooth or agreeable to the ear. The fact is, a *literal* was more an object of attention than an *elegant* translation, and we have the satisfaction to know, that we utter praise in the very words of inspiration. Our version is capable of the same defence with that of Sternhold and Hopkins, formerly used in the churches both of England and Scotland, as compared with the one now authorized in the sister establishment.

The book of Psalms” says that celebrated oriental scholar, the late Bishop Horsley, “ is a compendious system of Divinity for the use and edification of the common people of the Christian Church. In deriving the edification from it which it is calculated to convey, they may receive much assistance from a work which the ignorance of modern refinement would take out of their hands, I speak of the old singing Psalms, the metrical version of Sternhold and Hopkins. This is not what I believe is now generally supposed to be, nothing better than an awkward version of a former English translation. It was an *original* translation of the Hebrew text, earlier by many years than the prose translation of the Bible, and of all that are in any degree paraphrastic, as all verse in *some* degree *must* be, it is the best and most exact we have to put into the hands of the common people. The authors of this version considered the verse merely as a contrivance to assist the memory. They were little studious of the harmony of their numbers or the elegance of their diction, but they were solicitous to give the full and precise sense of the sacred text, according to the best of their judgment, and their judgment, with the exception of some few passages, was very good; and at the same time that they adhere scrupulously to the *letter*, they contrived to express it in such

such terms as, like the original, might point clearly to their *spiritual* meaning. It was a change much for the worse, when the pedantry of pretenders to taste in literary composition, thrust out this excellent translation from many of our churches to make room for what still goes by the name of *the new version* that of Tate and Brady, &c." The Translations and Paraphrases, usually bound with our National Psalter, were prepared by several Clergymen of poetical talents in the Church of Scotland, and were sanctioned by the Supreme Court, on June 1, 1781.

Scotland is proverbial for the laxity of its marriage laws; a declaration by the parties before witnesses being held sufficient to constitute a marriage good in law. A regular marriage, however, must be solemnized according to the rules of the Kirk, which require, that the names of contracting parties (of whatever rank, sect, or denomination) be made known to the Clergymen of the parishes where they respectively reside, who, if satisfied, authorise the Precentor to announce their names while the congregation assembles, either on three successive Sundays or thrice on one. The law enjoins the former, but the usage is in favour of the latter; and in certain exigencies a Presbytery may dispense with proclamation of banns altogether.* It is evident that the usage cannot be followed here in its full extent, as there is only one place of worship in connection with the Church of Scotland within the bounds of this Province, and of course, though the parties belong to different parishes, they can be published only in one. But as no better security is provided, and the Act of Provincial Legislature fully authorises the celebration of marriage according to the usage of our own Church, I trust that it will not be disregarded by you, persuaded as I am, that you are disposed to shew the sincerity of your attachment by yielding to the authority of the Church, in this as in all her other requisitions. I am willing to give every facility to honourable connections for life, and provided I have good reason privately to be satisfied that no legal objection stands in the way of the proposed alliance, I shall be as indulgent as the practice of the Church will justify, in as far as the ceremony of proclamation is concerned.

6th.—What is the practical tendency of the ecclesiastical constitution which has now been delineated? Try it by the test proposed in scripture, "By their fruits ye shall know them." To prove that the Presbyterian polity is not hostile to the cause of literature, it is quite sufficient to recollect the names of those distinguished individuals both at home and abroad, who have been trained in its principles and forms. Among the luminaries of the foreign Presbyterian churches may be mentioned Calvin, Martyr, Beza, Bullinger, Zanchius, Blondel, Salmasius, Dallæus, Claude, and many others whom it is needless to specify. Within the bosom of the Scottish church and in our own age have appeared a succession of men eminent in almost every department of literature—in theology, a Leechman, a Macnight, an Erskine, a Smith, a Wishart, and a Findlay;—in history, a Henry, a Robertson, and a Cook;—in philosophy, criticism, and belles lettres, a Reid, a Campbell, a Gerard, and

* Acts of Assembly abridged, p. 184. Edin. 1811.

* Stew
† The
communi
their infor
specimens

to their *spiritual* when the pedantry of this excellent translation still goes by the name of the *Translations*, were prepared in Scotland, and 1781.

laws; a declaration to constitute a marriage must be solemnized in the names of canon) be made known to the clergy, who, if their names while the Sundays or thrice on the favour of the latter; with proclamation of it be followed here in connection with since, and of course, it be published only by the Act of Provincial Synod according to the disregarded by you, the sincerity of your wish, in this as in all ability to honourable *son privately to be* proposed alliance, will justify, in as far

stical constitution proposed in scripture that the Presbytery is quite sufficient both at home and abroad. Among the mentioned Calvin, Dailaueus, Claude, within the bosom of a succession of more—in theology, and a Wishart, and a Cook;—in Campbell, a Gerard, and

and a Blair;—in mathematics and mechanical philosophy, a Stewart, a Small, a Playfair, and a Wilkie;—in poetry, a Wilkie, a Blair, a Blacklock, a Home, and an Ogilvie;—in oriental literature, a Robison and a Murray;—in eloquence, a Fordyce, a Walker, a Hunter, a Logan, a Hill, a Brown, a Moncrieff, and a Chalmers. Professor Stewart in his account of Dr. Robertson's style of eloquence says, "By many who are still able to judge from their own recollection, I shall not be accused of exaggeration, when I say, that in *some* of the most essential qualifications of a speaker, he was entitled to rank with the first names which have, in our times, adorned the British Senate. Nor was the opposition with which he had to contend unworthy of his exertions; formidable as it long was in zeal and numbers, and aided by a combination of talents which will not easily be equalled; the copious and fervid declamation of Crosbie; the classical, argumentative, and commanding eloquence of Dick; and the powerful, though coarse invective of Freebairn, whose name would, in a different age, have been transmitted to posterity with those of the justic and intrepid apostles who freed their country from the hierarchy of Rome."* To these illustrious names might be added many, not less deserving the meed of applause, but shrinking from public observation and doomed to "blush unseen" amid the obscurity of the village and the hamlet. I forbear mentioning the names of those who have excelled in liberal arts still more remote from the peculiar business of their profession than any of those which have now been specified,† because the critics have lately maintained, what such an enumeration would only tend to confirm, that the Scotch Clergy have never excelled as *theologians*. It must be acknowledged that Scotland cannot boast of such great *divines* as Usher, Jewell, Hall, Taylor, Stillingsfleet, Cudworth, Wilkins, Tillotson, Barrow, Burnet, Pearson, Whitby, Clarke, Hoadley, Jortin, Secker, Butler, Warburton, Horne, Lowth, Porteus, Hurd, Horsley, and others who have adorned the Church of England. But this very fact goes to prove that Presbyterian principles rather tend to *liberalise* than to *contract* the mind, whilst it is to be remembered, that there is no proportion in point of *numbers*, between the Churchmen on the North and those on the South of the Tweed, and that the Church of Scotland does not hold out the same objects of ambition in the line of the clerical profession with the Church of England. At same time, the young Scottish divines are too much bent on other pursuits to the neglect of theology; medicine is almost a universal study, and it is not unusual to see M.D. affixed to the name which *Reverend* precedes. Chairs in the Universities, conjoined with Church Livings, might operate in some cases as lures to youthful ambition, but by a late enactment of the Church, such a union of offices is no longer to be permitted except in the case of Clergymen settled in towns which are the seats of Universities or in their immediate vicinity. The object

* Stewart's Life of Robertson, p. 127.

† The *Statistical Account of Scotland* compiled by Sir John Sinclair from the communications of almost every individual clergyman, affords a pleasing testimony to their information and liberal views, and the *Scotch preacher* contains some very happy specimens of their pulpit compositions.

object for which I have adduced the names of these ornaments of the Scottish Church is gained, if the selection tends to prove that there is nothing either in the constitution or principles of that establishment which frowns on the elegant pursuits of sciences and arts.—But I shall have gained a still more important object if I succeed in shewing, that to the establishment of Presbytery is to be traced the intelligence which distinguishes the mass of the Scottish population, and the *parish schools* which are the boast of Scotland and the envy of her sister kingdoms. To this I made reference under a former head, and I shall now state the fact more fully in the language of the Biographer to whom I have already been so often indebted. “The compilers of the First Book of Discipline paid particular attention to the state of education. They required that a school should be erected in every parish for the instruction of youth in the principles of religion, grammar, and the Latin tongue. They proposed that a college should be erected in every “notable town,” in which logic and rhetoric should be taught along with the learned languages. They seem to have had it in their eye to revive the system adopted in some of the ancient republics, in which the youth were considered as the property of the public rather than of their parents, by obliging the nobility and gentry to educate their children, and by providing, at the public expence, for the education of the children of the poor who discovered talents for learning. Their regulations for the national universities discover an enlightened regard to the interests of literature, and may suggest hints which deserve attention in the present age.* If they were not reduced to practice, the blame cannot be imputed to the reformed ministers, but to those persons who, through avarice, defeated the execution of their plans.—To carry these important measures into effect, permanent funds were requisite; and for these it was natural to look to the patrimony of the church. The Popish Clergy had been superseded, and excluded from all religious services, by the alterations which the Parliament had introduced; and, whatever provision it was proper to allot for the individual incumbents during life, it was unreasonable that they should continue to enjoy the whole of the emoluments which were attached to the offices for which they had been found totally unfit. No successors could be appointed to them; and there was not any individual, or class of men in the nation, who could justly claim a title to the rents of their benefices. The compilers of the Book of Discipline, therefore, proposed that the patrimony of the Church should be appropriated, in the first instance, to the support of the new ecclesiastical establishment. Under this head they included the ministers, the schools, and the poor.”†

The parish schools continue to form an essential part of the ecclesiastical

* First Book of Discipline, ch vii. Dunlop ii. 347—561.

† M'Crie's Life of Knox, p. 10, vol. ii. Greek began to be studied as soon as the Reformation commenced, and the Hebrew language was taught as soon as the Protestant Church was established. The reformers themselves were skilled in the polite languages of modern Europe, and the chapter of the Bible at their family worship was read by the boys in French, Latin, Greek, and Hebrew. Row's M.S. Historie, p. 308, 356, 372. M'Crie's Life of Knox, vol. ii. p. 18.

tical
is ale
to ine
man
for th
strict
the tr
his bi
year,
in the
school
of the
try of
virtuo
is it t
other
is so v
portet
parish
at the
of the
the for
capaci
whilst
ance a
To wh
of educ
neglect
rance o
Scotlan
of instr
habits
triumph
blood o
again a
world,
noxious
Such
of the C
you rec
minds w
be carri

* See C
the poor.
has frequ
will doub
the mean
with the h

ments of the
 that there is
 establishment
 -But I shall
 wing, that to
 ence which
 parish schools
 gdoms. To
 state the fact
 have already
 of Discipline
 quired that a
 of youth in
 They pro-
 n," in which
 languages.
 adopted in
 ndered as the
 the nobility
 t the public
 o discovered
 universities
 re, and may
 If they were
 he reformed
 d the execu-
 o effect, per-
 o look to the
 ersed, and
 h the Parlia-
 r to allot for
 t they should
 o attached to
 o successors
 ual, or class
 ents of their
 re, proposed
 , in the first
 ent. Under
 or.*†
 the ecclesias-
 tical

studied as soon
 as soon as the
 e skilled in the
 at their family
 Row's M.S.
 8.

tical establishment of Scotland. Wherever there is a parish church there is also a parish school. The law of the country gives the Clergy a power to inspect colleges, schools, and all seminaries of education. The clergyman of every parish is constituted judge of the qualifications of candidates for the office of parochial schoolmaster, and clerical residence being strictly enjoined, he is always on the spot to watch over the teacher and the taught; whilst the church requires him to call in the assistance of his brethren of the Presbytery to examine the school *at least* once every year, and to report to the Synod and General Assembly as to their fidelity in the discharge of this duty and as to the state in which every individual school is found. The effect of this vigilant inspection over the education of the young is manifest not only in the information by which the peasantry of Scotland are distinguished, but also in the prevalence of those virtuous habits which are the best supports of civilized society. Whence is it that there are so few *criminal trials* in Scotland compared with the other divisions of the Empire? that the number of capital punishments is so vastly disproportionate? that the poor of a parish in Essex are supported at the enormous expence of £1500 per annum, whilst those of a parish not less populous in the county of Fife, are comfortably maintained at the annual rate of £24? * Whence the vast difference in the condition of the Irish compared with that of the peasantry in Scotland? Among the former, with every advantage in point of climate, soil, and intellectual capacity, you behold sloth and its attendants, beggary and wretchedness; whilst in Scotland, a degree of decency and comfort, the fruit of temperance and industry, are conspicuous among the lower classes of society. To what is this disparity to be ascribed but to the vast difference in point of education? In Ireland, the education of the poor is shamefully neglected, very few of them can read, and they grow up in a total ignorance of what it most befits a rational creature to understand;† while in Scotland the establishment of schools in every parish, brings the means of instruction within the reach of the poorest, who are there inured to habits of piety, industry, decency and order. These are better arches of triumph and of safety than those built by the bones and cemented by the blood of our fellow creatures. These I hope and pray, should the storm again arise and launch the flashes of Almighty vengeance on a guilty world, will arrest the lightnings in their course, and conduct them innoxious to the ground.

Such are the principles, such is the constitution, and such the tendency of the Church of Scotland;—that Church in the bosom of which many of you received your first and best impressions; which is associated in your minds with some of your dearest recollections; and which, I trust, will be carried forward on the stream of time with a reputation ever gather-

* See Chalmers's on the influence of Bible Societies on the temporal necessities of the poor. † This fact in regard to the Irish is so notorious and so melancholy, that it has frequently come under the consideration of our enlightened Parliament, and means will doubtless ultimately be employed with effect to ameliorate their condition. In the meantime the exertions of the Hibernian Society in the same cause are attended with the happiest effects. May they go on and prosper!

ing and the triumphs of a distinction that will never die. I have been thus minute, because I wish it to be distinctly understood that Presbyterianism is not a particular species of religion, but merely a scheme of government which admits of elders who rule and do not "labour in word and doctrine;"—because I wish you to feel at once your importance and your safety as connected with the ecclesiastical constitution of one great division of the United Kingdom;—and because the forms and statutes of that Church require to be made known that they may have the full weight of their authority over all its members. Without a religious establishment, heathenism would prevail; and, therefore, the inhabitants of these Colonies are to be congratulated on having provision made for the support of such an ecclesiastical constitution as that of England; but, as Colonial population is supplied from different parts of the mother country, a branch of the Church established in one or two of its divisions could not be supposed to attain the full object; and therefore, with a liberality ever associated with the British name, Government comes forward to aid the exertions of individuals in maintaining a representation of the other National establishment. "Upon the genuine grounds of separation from the church of Rome," says Archdeacon Blackburn, "all particular churches are co-ordinate; they have all the same right in an equal degree, and the decisions of one are, in point of authority, upon the same level with those of another." Even on the supposition that our Provincial hierarchy were as complete as that either of England or Scotland, a member of the latter church would no more become a Dissenter by crossing the Atlantic, than the Primate of all England would by crossing the Tweed; but in a case in which there are neither revenues nor temporal jurisdiction to confer distinction or exclusive influence, the practical value of either establishment must greatly depend on unanimity and co-operation. I beseech you then, Christian Brethren, whilst you rejoice that you are counted worthy to suffer shame for that profession which your fathers maintained while they lived and in which they triumphed when they died, banish from your minds every feeling of disaffection towards other forms and other worshippers. Despise religion of whatever is unlovely and repulsive, that it may appear only pure, but gentle; not only majestic, but amiable; equally favourable to the enjoyment and communication of happiness. Pray for the peace of Jerusalem. They shall prosper that love thee. Peace be within thy walls and prosperity within thy palaces. For my brethren and countrymen's sakes, I will now say, Peace be within thee. Because of the Lord our God, I will seek thy good.

† Confessional, p. 34.

† Psalm cxxxii, 6.

ERRATUM—in page 8, for "*Lery*" read "*Livy*."

FINIS

538

800

